

Leonid BREZHNEV: *The Period of Stagnation*

AN UNBIASED ANALYSIS OF THE NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE
OF LEONID BREZHNEV'S 18-YEAR LEADERSHIP (1964-1982)
TODAY HELPS US FIND CORRECT SOLUTIONS TO
QUESTIONS PUT BY PERESTROIKA

WRITING ON
PERESTROIKA

ЛИТЕРАТУРНАЯ
ГАЗЕТА

ИЗДАЕТСЯ С 1929
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рабочий
класс
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мир

НЕДЕЛЯ



МОСКОВСКИЕ
НОВОСТИ

ЕДИНСТВЕННАЯ ГАЗЕТА СОЮЗНЫХ СОВЕТСКИХ ОБЩЕСТВ ДРУЖБЫ И КУЛЬТУРНОЙ СВЯЗИ С ЗАРУБЕЖНЫМИ СТРАНАМИ И АГЕНТСТВА ПЕЧАТИ НОСТА
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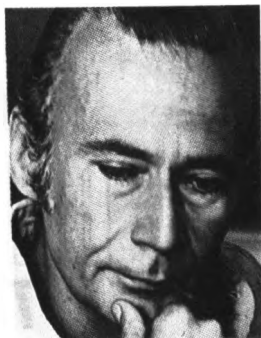
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Roy MEDVEDEV,
historian

"Brezhnev was never what one might call 'a strong personality'. He had a weak character and weak will. In many ways he was not only a well-wishing man but a spineless man. But qualities that could be considered praiseworthy in the man in the street seem misplaced in a superpower leader."
Pp. 5-20

НЕДЕЛЯ



Melor STURUA,
journalist

"Without mastering the art of survival, one could not hope for success in the struggle for power, especially supreme power. Brezhnev had that art at his fingertips. It would be a plain injustice to call him mediocre in this respect."
Pp. 21-27



Andrei BREZHNEV,
diplomat

"I don't venture to judge whether or not he possessed all the qualities which are indispensable for a leader of state. But I think it's unfair to lay all the blame on one person instead of those who worked next to him and were responsible for specific work sectors."
Pp. 28-33



Fedor BURLATSKY,
D.Sc. (Philosophy)

"We need to think hard and do a lot to prevent another Brezhnev, not to mention another Chernenko, from becoming the supreme leader or even a member of the leadership. It is obvious now that an inept leader is bound to start imposing his cult, wasting the nation's wealth, and breeding corruption."
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The articles are printed in abridged form

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Roy MEDVEDEV,
historian

Brezhnev: a Political Sketch-Portrait

Death of a Politician and Political Death

True politicians never die as far as politics is concerned, even when they die physically. Politics, though, differs little in this respect from any other field of human activity. Politicians may end their political careers and become unimportant for their country or party even in their lifetime. This is called political death. In the opinion of Josip Broz Tito, political death might appear even more abhorrent to a politician than physical death. This is indeed what happened with Leonid Brezhnev. For a number of reasons, he held a very important political post and played a significant role in national politics and international affairs for twenty years. He has merited a few lines or even pages in history text books. But he was such a mediocre personality and politician that he could hardly hope for a long life in politics. Indeed, Brezhnev is beginning to fade away from the political scene not only in the direct but also the figurative sense of the word.

Brezhnev was not overconcerned about his health when he

was 50 or even 60. He did not forgo all those worldly pleasures which do not always make for a long life.

Apparently, Brezhnev had his first serious health problems in 1969 or 1970. Doctors were permanently placed at his side, and special medical rooms were equipped wherever he stayed. In early 1976 Brezhnev suffered clinical death but the doctors saved his life. For two months he could not work and his thoughts and speech were confused. From that time onward a group of resuscitation experts with all the necessary equipment constantly remained at Brezhnev's side. Though our leaders' health was a carefully guarded state secret, Brezhnev's progressing infirmity was evident to any TV viewer.

In effect, he was slowly dying before the eyes of the whole world. In his last six years he had several heart attacks and strokes and the resuscitation specialists repeatedly saved him from clinical death.

Needless to say, Brezhnev's infirmity affected the way he ran the country. He often had to give up his duties and delegate them to his ever growing staff of aides. His working day shrank to several hours. He began to vacation in spring, as well as in summer. It gradually became more difficult for him to perform even protocol duties and he began to lose track of what was going on around him. But a great many influential and profoundly corrupt people in his immediate circle were interested in Brezhnev appearing in public from time to time if only as a formal head of state. They literally walked him around and achieved the worst possible result: the Soviet leader's old age and infirmity were not so much pitied or sympathised with by his fellow countrymen as scorned and derided—and increasingly openly at that.

During the military and civil parades on November 7, 1982 Brezhnev stood on the podium of the Lenin Mausoleum for several hours, despite the bad weather, and foreign papers reported that he looked better than usual. But he died only three days later. During breakfast Brezhnev repaired to his study to fetch something and stayed there too long. His wife went after him and found him lying on the rug near his desk. This time the doctors' efforts were in vain and four hours after his heart had stopped beating they pronounced him dead. The next day the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government officially informed the world of Leonid Brezhnev's death.

Foreign newsmen in Moscow reported that many of the

ordinary citizens took the news of Brezhnev's death with quiet indifference. They had long been expecting it. "Passed away at last," said an elderly woman worker, who some time before had commented sympathetically: "He's so old and ill, and they still make him work." The woman and her husband were younger and healthier than Brezhnev. They had retired long before then and spent most of their time watching television. Indeed, most people took the news of Brezhnev's death calmly without any sign of what would appear to be "popular grief".

In an Address to the Soviet People, the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Council of Ministers and the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet said that Leonid Brezhnev's life and work would always remain an inspiring example of loyal service to the Communist Party and the Soviet people. But as early as two weeks later a plenary meeting of the Party's Central Committee made indirect but biting criticism of many shortcomings of the former leadership and the bureaucratic methods of government that had been established under it. Brezhnev's name appeared in print less often and his portraits were taken off the walls of Moscow houses and offices. Newspapers and magazines hardly ever quoted or referred to Brezhnev. All kinds of events to perpetuate his memory in December 1982 were held in a rather formal atmosphere. Reports about memorial meetings were brief and printed on back pages. At the ceremonial meeting marking the 60th anniversary of the USSR, Brezhnev's name was mentioned only once—in the introductory speech by Konstantin Chernenko. On the other hand, his words to the effect that the Party and the people "must orientate themselves towards practical undertakings, not strident slogans" were understood as a criticism of Brezhnev. The phrase met with applause. As of February 1983, Brezhnev's name was hardly ever mentioned at all.

Brezhnev left his heirs an oppressive legacy of intractable problems. The last five years of his rule had essentially witnessed a deepening economic and political crisis. None of the economic plans had been met. The country's national product had increased by not more than two per cent a year, due to deterioration in many important economic areas. Huge problems had developed in the energy, coal and timber industries, in transport, and in the production of many consumer goods. There had been four years of crop failure on end, and that was not only the result of bad weather. The production of

grain had dropped particularly. This resulted in a corresponding increase in grain and food purchases abroad. The food shops were increasingly poorly stocked and in most of the industrial centres food supplies had to be rationed. The commercial trade system was expanded, with higher prices. All this caused discontent among the people.

The Soviet Union's international position had been extremely aggravated. Little of the detente period had survived and Soviet relations with the United States began to resemble the worst times of the Cold War. The countries of the East and the West stood on the brink of another spiral of the ever more dangerous, costly and senseless arms race. The Soviet leaders were confronted with the difficult problem of Afghanistan in the east and the no less difficult problem of Poland in the west. The Sino-Vietnamese conflict, Kampuchea and the advent of a conservative government in the Federal Republic of Germany all created problems for Soviet foreign policy. The political capital amassed by the Brezhnev administration in the detente years and during the fairly rapid economic growth of the 1960s was almost completely lost.

Political, economic or even military failures and difficulties cannot, of course, be the only reason for the political death of a national or party leader. Many great politicians have failed in their undertakings or had the sad opportunity of seeing their lives' labours come to nought, without it automatically resulting in their political death. The scope of the personality and of the achievements of a political or cultural figure sometimes even grows in the grateful memory of their heirs and descendants.

But the truth is that Brezhnev was not a truly outstanding or even great person. In brief, I must say that he was a weak man in almost all respects. In this he differed from his predecessors. He did not have Lenin's intellectual power or political genius. He did not have Stalin's superhuman will or malicious craving for power. He did not have Khrushchev's exceptional independence, great spirit of reform or huge capacity for work. Both in his character and intellectual powers Brezhnev was a shallow and mediocre politician but also a great master of intrigue within the apparatus.

Brezhnev was never what one might call "a strong personality". He had a weak character and weak will. In many ways he was not only a well-wishing man but a spineless man. But

qualities that could be considered praiseworthy in the man in the street seem misplaced in a superpower leader.

Without doubt, Brezhnev's weakness as a leader and a human being was bound to affect the state of affairs in the country. But this was not a simple relationship, for the deterioration of the domestic and international situation was caused by a host of objective reasons. But the depth of the difficulties was exacerbated by subjective reasons, including the progressing enfeeblement of Brezhnev and his closest associates. Sometimes Brezhnev became confused when he met a no less self-assured yet more ingenious and experienced politician. At such meetings Brezhnev would always feel inferior. Later he would ask his aides what impression he had produced. The first stroke in the winter of 1976 affected not only his speech and movements but his intellectual powers. Helmut Schmidt and Jimmy Carter both became convinced of that. In 1979 when Brezhnev and Carter were to meet in private, i.e., only in the presence of the interpreters, at the SALT-2 talks in Vienna, Carter was unable to hold a serious political conversation with Brezhnev. The Brezhnev he had to deal with was not a "self-assured" politician but, sooner, a pitiful sick child.

Brezhnev's Attitude to Work

Brezhnev's style of work as a national and party leader stemmed from his political temperament. He performed his duties in good faith but did not like to take on too much work. Of course, at times he had to work under a lot of pressure but as soon as he became the key figure in the Politbureau, his working day, far from growing, began to shrink. He never tried to monopolise control over the most important affairs and was even less willing to do work that was the responsibility of lower-ranking officials. Unlike Stalin, he did not go into particulars regarding the design of new tanks or aircraft, artillery guns or dam projects. Unlike Khrushchev, he did not dabble in agronomy or standard housing design. In Brezhnev's opinion, each official was entirely responsible for his own area of work. One can say that this was a perfectly correct approach to his duties as a party and national leader. Brezhnev's shortcoming, however, was that he did not take too much trouble over checking the work of his aides and

subordinates, and often entrusted them with affairs that only the head of the Party and the state could effectively manage. Brezhnev, usually a composed and even indecisive man, was not even feared by low-ranking Party officials, not to mention his Politbureau colleagues. Under Brezhnev, each of the secretaries of regional Party committees and ministers was more independent in his actions than under Khrushchev or Stalin. Combined with the course towards personnel "stability", this gave them great power at their institutions or on the territory under their control. One can say, therefore, that in the Brezhnev years the over-rigid centralisation of the Party and the state apparatus weakened. Sometimes this was all to the good, but often it caused harm to the state and the people. Parochial and departmental sentiments increased and there were also direct abuses of office and corruption.

The measure of decentralisation over the last 15 to 20 years was attended by an increase in the number and power of all kinds of central agencies. Far from decreasing under Brezhnev, the bureaucratic machine expanded. It operated even worse than before. The Party apparatus led by Brezhnev tried to impede rather than assist the growth of reasonable independence of economic bodies. This was the prime reason why the economic reform launched by Kosygin came to nothing.

Since Brezhnev had an insufficient capacity for work, his staff of personal aides and secretaries kept growing until it turned into a large and influential apparatus and became officially known as the Secretariat under the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. The Secretariat worked parallel to the Central Committee staff, which confused the system of Party leadership and generated red tape. Brezhnev became too accustomed to trusting his aides and subordinates. As a result he was extremely dependent on his own entourage which consisted of people with vastly different business and moral qualities. Ultimately, Brezhnev began to live in a world of illusions which he had either created himself or which had been imposed on him. He hardly ever talked to ordinary people and knew nothing about their complaints and sentiments. Representatives of the people, whom Lenin had received so often, were not admitted to Brezhnev. True, he regularly attended meetings of 18th Army veterans with whom he had lived through most of the war. But there were none too many frank conversations there either. "How well the Soviet

people live now," Brezhnev told a group of veterans during one of his last meetings. Many veterans came from towns where meat, butter and cheese had long disappeared from the shops. But they did not argue with him.

Brezhnev's Political Career Before 1964

Brezhnev was appointed to his first responsible job at the Dnepropetrovsk Regional Party Committee in 1938 when he was 32 years old. By the standards of the time his career did not advance very quickly. Brezhnev was not a career-minded man, elbowing his way up and betraying his friends. Even then he was a quiet man, loyal to his colleagues and chiefs. He did not advance himself but, rather, was advanced by others. At the first stage, Brezhnev was promoted by Konstantin Grushevoi, a friend of his at the Dnepropetrovsk Smelting Institute, who was then first secretary of the Dneprodzerzhinsk City Party Committee. In the war years Brezhnev did not have any strong backing and made little progress. At the beginning of the war he was awarded the rank of colonel and he finished up as major-general, only one rank higher. Nor did he win many combat awards. At the end of the war he had two Orders of the Red Banner, one Order of the Red Star, one Order of Bogdan Khmel'nitsky, and two medals. This was not too many for a wartime general. During the Victory Parade in Red Square, as Major-General Brezhnev marched with his commander at the head of a massed column of the group of armies in which he had served, he wore many fewer awards than other generals.

After the war Brezhnev owed his advancement to Khrushchev, a fact he carefully conceals in his memoirs. In *Rebirth* he mentions Stalin but says nothing about Khrushchev.

After working for some time in Zaporozhye, Brezhnev was appointed first secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk Regional Party Committee, on Khrushchev's recommendation, and in 1950, first secretary of the Central Committee of Moldavia's Communist Party. At the 19th Party Congress in the autumn of 1952, Brezhnev, as the leader of the Moldavian Communist Party, was elected to the CPSU Central Committee. For a

short while he was a member of the Presidium* (alternate member) and the Secretariat of the Central Committee, which had been considerably expanded at Stalin's suggestion. Stalin saw Brezhnev for the first time at the Congress. The old and sick dictator took heed of the thick-set and well-dressed Brezhnev, then aged 46. Stalin was told this was the Party leader of Moldavia. "What a handsome Moldavian," Stalin said.

After Stalin's death, the Presidium and the Secretariat of the Central Committee were immediately reduced. Brezhnev lost his post there but did not return to Moldavia. He was appointed chief of the Political Department of the Soviet Army and Navy. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general and had to wear an army uniform again. Brezhnev invariably supported Khrushchev in the Central Committee.

In early 1954 Khrushchev sent him to Kazakhstan to supervise the virgin-land project. Brezhnev returned to Moscow only in 1956 and after the 20th CPSU Congress again became a Central Committee secretary and an alternate member of the Central Committee's Presidium. Brezhnev was in charge of heavy industry and later of the defence and aerospace industries. But, in effect, Khrushchev made all the major decisions himself while Brezhnev acted as a quiet and loyal assistant. After the Central Committee plenary meeting in June 1957 Brezhnev became a member of the Presidium. Khrushchev appreciated his loyalty but did not consider him a good enough worker.

When Kliment Voroshilov retired, Brezhnev took over from him as Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Some Western biographers view this appointment as little short of Brezhnev's defeat in the struggle for power. In actual fact, Brezhnev was not an active participant in the power struggle and was very content with his new appointment. At the time he did not aspire to become the leader of the Party or the government. He was quite satisfied with his "third-man" role in the leadership. As early as 1956 and 1957, he secured jobs in Moscow for some of the people with whom he had worked in Moldavia and the Ukraine. One of the first to arrive was Chernenko. He was given a job in Brezhnev's

* The Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee (1952-1966), the precursor of the Politbureau, was the leading Party body elected by the Central Committee plenary meeting to guide the Central Committee's work in between its plenary meetings.

secretariat, and became chief of Brezhnev's office in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

In 1963, when Frol Kozlov fell out of favour with Khrushchev and also had a stroke, Khrushchev wavered for some time over choosing a new favourite. At last he placed his confidence in Brezhnev, who was elected Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Khrushchev was in very good health and hoped to stay in power for many more years. In the meantime, Brezhnev was disappointed with Khrushchev's decision, although his new job at the Secretariat gave him more power and influence. He had no wish to plunge into the extremely hectic and difficult work of a Central Committee Secretary. Though Brezhnev did not mastermind Khrushchev's overthrow, he knew about the conspiracy. The chief conspirators were at variance on many matters. In order not to heighten their differences or place the whole plan at risk, they agreed to choose Brezhnev as the successor, considering this to be a temporary solution. Brezhnev accepted the offer.

Sometimes There Is a Call for Weak Leaders

After Khrushchev's downfall, the top Party and state officials were unwilling to have too strong a leader. They wanted to lead quiet lives and do their work in peace. They wanted more stability in their jobs and more confidence in their future. The more important members of the Central Committee were resentful of any other "strong" leaders of the Shelepin type. Mikoyan once said about Shelepin that "this young man might cause too much trouble". Nor was the Party elite well-disposed towards such dogmatists and ascetics as Suslov. They wanted to have a weaker and more benevolent leader without any great intellectual powers or strength of will. This thirst for stability dovetailed with Brezhnev's "stability" slogan.

When he travelled around the Soviet Union, Brezhnev was welcomed much more warmly by Party activists than Khrushchev was. A visit by Khrushchev used to be regarded as a strict inspection. Brezhnev's visits, on the other hand, were seen as a kind of demonstration showing his unity with the local Party and state bureaucrats. Confident of the back-

ing of those bureaucrats, Brezhnev slowly but surely rid the Politbureau of men with political ambitions—Alexander Shelepin, Gennadi Voronov, Kirill Mazurov, Pyotr Shelest and Dmitri Polyansky.

Brezhnev's Vanity

Having secured control of the Party and the state, Brezhnev, judging from his behaviour, was beset by an inferiority complex. In the first years of his rule he realised, deep inside, that he lacked many qualities and much of the knowledge needed to govern such a nation as the Soviet Union. His aides tried to convince him of the opposite. They began to flatter him, and the more gratitude Brezhnev showed for their flattery, the more often and profusely he was flattered. Eventually, he became dependent on flattery as on a drug.

All kinds of myths began to be created, especially myths about Brezhnev's role in the war. Being a political officer, Brezhnev did not participate in the more decisive battles of the Patriotic War. One of the key episodes of the war history of the 18th Army was the seizure of a bridgehead south of Novorossiisk in 1943. The bridgehead, known as Little Land, was held for 225 days. Only the assault units of the 18th Army had fought there. The army headquarters and the political office remained farther inland in relative safety. Judging from Brezhnev's short book, he visited Little Land on two occasions: first with a CPSU Central Committee team, and later to present Party cards and awards to officers and men. From the latter half of the 1970s this heroic episode, which did not play any significant role in the general course of the war, began to be exaggerated out of all proportion. It was described and discussed more often than other, truly great battles of the war. Brezhnev's role in the fighting at Little Land was blown up too.

The pompous ceremonies, the naming of Novorossiisk as a hero-city and the opening of a huge memorial and museums devoted to the war history of the 18th Army was all a bit too much and generated derisive jokes even among the military. Even the estate near Moscow, where a big dacha had been built for Brezhnev, and nearby, dachas for his daughter, son and granddaughter, was dubbed by local people as "Little Land".

Brezhnev's remarkable penchant for awards and honours never evoked respect—only sneers. I mentioned earlier that after the war Major-General Brezhnev had only four orders and two medals. After the war, when Stalin was still alive, Brezhnev was awarded the Order of Lenin. In the ten years under Khrushchev he was awarded the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Patriotic War, First Class. But when Brezhnev became the leader of the Party and the nation, awards began to rain on him as if out of a horn of plenty. By the end of his life Brezhnev had many more orders and medals than Stalin and Khrushchev put together. He was fond of receiving combat awards. The title of Hero of the Soviet Union was conferred on him four times. Dozens of times he was awarded the title of Hero and the top orders of all other socialist countries. He even received orders of Latin American and African countries. Brezhnev was awarded the top Soviet combat order, the Victory Order, which had been presented only to the top army leaders who had scored brilliant victories commanding groups of armies. Naturally, after receiving so many top combat awards, Brezhnev became dissatisfied with his rank of lieutenant-general. In 1976 he was made Marshal of the Soviet Union. He arrived at a meeting with 18th Army veterans clad in overalls. As he walked into the room, he commanded: "Attention. A marshal is coming." Off came the overalls, leaving Brezhnev in a marshal's uniform. Pointing to the stars on his epaulettes, he said proudly: "Served my way up to this."

At the funerals of Soviet leaders, it is customary for officers to carry the late leader's awards attached to small velvet cushions. When Suslov was buried, fifteen senior officers followed the coffin, carrying his orders and medals. Brezhnev had more than two hundred orders and medals. Several of these had to be attached to each of the cushions, and the escort of honour had to be limited to forty-four senior officers.

Lacking any oratory skills, Brezhnev nonetheless would make speeches almost daily. His speeches were televised all over the country or featured in newsreels. Needless to say, all this damaged his reputation and presented graphic proof of the degradation of oratory arts among the leaders.

Lenin never wrote his speeches in advance, nor even his reports to Party congresses; he merely drew up an outline. Stalin took painstaking efforts to prepare his speeches. He had a weak voice and a pronounced Georgian accent. Some of his

words and even phrases were lost on the listeners. And although he was flattered as a great speaker, he knew this was not so. Accordingly, he spoke very seldom in public, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, but in any case, he wrote his speeches himself. Khrushchev spoke in public very often and could talk away for three or four hours. His long-winded orations often provoked sneers and even irritated people. But Khrushchev did not simply read his speeches. He would meet his speech writers before a given occasion and give lengthy explanations about the main points he wished them to make. But he could also speak off the cuff and conduct impromptu news conferences and debates. Furthermore, Khrushchev would often depart from the prepared speech and begin to improvise at important occasions.

Brezhnev merely read speeches which were written for him. But he even had great difficulty in reading his speeches and made a lot of mistakes in pronunciation. Brezhnev grew confused at public appearances and before TV cameras. Without a written text he was unable to make even a brief congratulatory speech when he presented awards to his Politbureau colleagues.

Back in the 1960s when Brezhnev's long-winded speeches were broadcast on the radio or television, few people would listen. In the 1970s, even in public places such as hotels or hospitals, people would turn off the TV set as soon as Brezhnev started speaking.

Benevolence and Sentimentality

Brezhnev was a benevolent man on the whole. He hated any complications or conflicts either in politics or in his relations with his colleagues. When conflicts did occur, he tried to avoid taking extreme decisions; when they broke out among the leaders, very few people were forced to retire. Most leading officials who fell into disfavour would remain within the state apparatus but be demoted two or three ranks. A Politbureau member would become a deputy minister, while a former minister, a secretary of an important regional Party committee or a member of the CPSU Central Committee would be made an ambassador to Denmark, Belgium, Australia or Norway.

Brezhnev's benevolence often bordered on laissez-faire

which was exploited by dishonest people. He would often keep on not only officials who had committed offences, but those who were totally corrupt.

Willi Brandt, ex-Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, wrote about Brezhnev's "quick tears" in his memoirs. Many were indeed surprised at the Soviet leader being such a sentimental man. A quality rare in politics, it sometimes turned out to be beneficial to art. In the early 1970s a film was made, called *The Byelorussian Station*. It was a good picture but the censors banned it from the screen, considering it to be unjust to the Moscow militia. The film's backers managed to get it previewed by members of the Politbureau. In one episode, some wartime friends meet by chance and sing a song about the assault battalion in which they served. Brezhnev was moved to tears by the song composed to the lyrics of Bulat Okudzhava. Needless to say, the picture was immediately given the OK, and the song about the assault battalion was featured at almost all the concerts Brezhnev attended.

A similar situation developed over the film *Red Berry*. An ex-convict goes with his lady friend to visit his elderly mother. Hiding behind the door, the man listens to his mother talk about him, the long-lost son whom she still loves and awaits. He cannot pluck up the courage to walk into the room. Instead, he goes away, weeping, and falls on the grass near a half-ruined church. The censors insisted that the latter episode be cut: let the man weep wherever he pleases but not by a church. But it was just there and then that Brezhnev shed a tear. The picture was permitted to be screened uncut and brought deserved acclaim to its author, Vasili Shukshin.

Family Bonds and the Instinct for Power

Not being a strong personality, Brezhnev possessed a kind of instinct for power. Whereas he had previously shown no overt desire to dominate, by and by he accepted his role as actual leader of the Party and the state and developed an ever greater liking for it. Yet, he realised or sensed that he could only build up his own authority and influence by appointing his close friends, not simply deserving people, to key Party and government posts. These appointees included his friends, co-students, colleagues with whom he had worked in

Dnepropetrovsk and Moldavia, army mates, and even his and his wife's relatives. Being a sociable man, Brezhnev had many friends. This group was often called "the Dnepropetrovsk team", though it included many people who had never worked in Dnepropetrovsk. "The Brezhnev team" would have been a more accurate name.

Every key politician in an authoritarian or democratic country probably makes up a "team" of people he trusts. But Brezhnev's "team" became too large, while not including too many talented politicians or executives. In fact, there were far too many bad leaders in Brezhnev's "team" who stayed on in their jobs solely because of his backing.

Yet, Brezhnev failed to promote many people from his "team" to top jobs in the Army, the Foreign Ministry, and the Politbureau and the Secretariat of the CPSU Central Committee. For this reason, despite his obvious efforts, people with independent political backgrounds have now assumed leadership in the country and the Party. Anyway, "the Brezhnev team" does not appear to be the best part of the legacy the late leader left to the Party.

Stalin and his atrocities are being discussed much more now than they were in the Khrushchev years. Novels, memoirs, essays, feature films and newsreels condemn Stalinism almost every single day. Still, the ranks of supporters of the tyrant who died 36 years ago are not thinning out so quickly. Stalin's personality cult has become too deeply ingrained in the minds of several generations of Soviet people and has proved more difficult to overcome than the active opponents of Stalinism would like.

Criticism of Brezhnev still remains too dull and general. Still, it has proved enough for Brezhnev's personality cult to dissipate with striking speed. For almost 15 years our propaganda made overbearing efforts to build up an image of Brezhnev as "a great champion of peace", "a great Leninist", and "a great theorist". Yet, all this costly propaganda has turned out to be in vain. Brezhnev has not left an imprint on the minds of Soviet people, who treated him with indifference, evolving, in the last years of his life, into poorly concealed scorn.

Our press talks of the Stalin years as the time of "great terror" and "great change", the time of "victory and tragedy". Long ago euphemisms were coined to describe the Khrushchev years as "the time of subjectivism and voluntarism".

Historians and journalists have been searching for a definition of the Brezhnev years: "the time of flattery", "the time of all-permissiveness and red tape", "the time of stagnation", and "gerontocracy". Any one of these names seems suitable.

But was it really all so bad in the Brezhnev years? Didn't we call the 1970s the calmest decade in Soviet history? Yes, we did, but those were stagnantly calm times, when problems were put off instead of solved, and when the clouds became ever darker. Weren't the 1970s the time of detente? They were indeed, but that detente was too brittle and its results could hardly be felt by 1980 when Brezhnev was still alive. Didn't the Soviet people live better in the early 1980s than in the early 1960s? Yes, indeed, living conditions had improved, but far too slowly for large numbers of farmers, factory workers and office employees. All kinds of cash payments increased much faster than the production of consumer goods, the provision of services and housing construction. Didn't the Soviet Union attain strategic parity with America in the Brezhnev years? Yes, it did, but the goal was achieved at too high a price for our economy and at too high a level, far beyond the bounds of reasonable sufficiency. Besides, the arms race went on, continuing to bleed the nation.

The Soviet Union has now recovered from the horrors of Stalin's terror. But unlawful repressions were still carried out in the Brezhnev times, though on a lesser scale, maintaining a "moderate" fear which was bolstered by continual attempts to rehabilitate Stalin. We did not even have elementary order in the country, let alone the triumph of legality. There was ever more mismanagement, irresponsibility and all-permissiveness. Corruption became increasingly open and brazen. Abuse of office and embezzlement, on both a large and small scale, became a fact of life. Factionalism, mutual covering up and mafia-like support were imposed on all areas of public and state administration from Party leaders both in Moscow and the provinces to the editors of literary journals and the leaders of unions of artists.

The unwillingness and inability to work well, the political passivity and apathy, the indifference to the moral and political values of socialism, the moral degradation of tens of millions of people, the universal rule of mediocrity, the discrepancy between word and deed and the encouragement of universal lies—all this crippled the mentality of a whole generation, which we now justly call "the lost generation".

From this point of view, the overall consequences of Brezhnev's rule proved no less depressing than those of Stalinism. The country and society ended up in a blind alley, a situation that can no longer be tolerated.

Throughout its history the Soviet Union has been progressing by leaps and bounds—from one socio-political crisis to another. Each administration advanced the nation but had used up its potential long before its leaders retired from politics. From this viewpoint the Brezhnev administration had exhausted itself by the mid-1970s.

It would have been strange if that ugly farce had not provoked opposition. While open opposition weakened in the wake of repressions, covert opposition gained strength. It was led by such different individuals as Yuri Andropov, Dmitri Ustinov and Mikhail Gorbachev.

The history of this gruelling struggle, which has not quite ended to date, is yet to be written. Possibly, it will remain unwritten for some time to come. Scathing criticism is being made nowadays but it refers to the entire period of stagnation, not to its more important architects and representatives. Daniil Granin, a popular author, has defined the latter period of Brezhnev's rule in the following way: "The zealous work of specialists and toadies of all ranks fenced them off from the life of the people and benefited themselves first and foremost. The toadies insisted that a great country must have a great leader. And they began to create one. Bloated merits corresponded to bloated reports and figures. This proceeded from rank to rank, from stage to stage. The good intentions of the 1965 and 1966 were gradually replaced with endless speeches. Historians would do well to study the mechanisms of that sad process in more detail."

Historians take a long time over their work and I think politicians will pre-empt them. The Brezhnev administration scared everybody with its irrationality: it is difficult to trust a political group that rules a great nation according to the principle "after us the deluge". Brezhnev was physically dying for an agonisingly long period before the eyes of the whole world. Now the time of his political death has come. But this is no reason to keep silent about Brezhnev. It is not enough just to remove the plates bearing his name from city streets, squares and districts in order to wipe out his legacy. For this reason I can only join in the appeal of Nikolai Kozyrev, an ordinary worker, who said: "It is necessary to open the window not only to the grisly 1930s but also to the suffocating 1970s."

НЕДЕЛЯ

Nedelya (Week) is an illustrated Sunday supplement to the newspaper *Izvestia*. First published in March 1960, it comes out in two million copies.

Melor STURUA,
journalist

The Story of an Old Picture

On September 25, 1963 the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet ratified the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water. That same day the ratification was reported in *Izvestia*. The article was written by Valentin Lednev and myself and it appeared under the heading "Izvestia's Parliamentary Correspondents Report from the Kremlin".

I suggested the heading. Alexei Adzhubei, the then editor-in-chief of the paper, unhesitatingly gave it his seal of approval. It was even decided to make this a standing feature.

The report from the Kremlin was illustrated with a picture by Nikolai Rakhmanov, a *Nedelya* photographer. It seemed a normal picture at first glance—a hackneyed, official photograph of the Presidium in session. It looked that way to an unsophisticated eye. But an experienced "Kremlinologist" would immediately have felt the strangeness of it.

To begin with, the picture did not record the act of ratification. The caption stated that the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet was meeting in session and that Vasili Kuznetsov, First Deputy Foreign Minister, was making a speech.

Secondly, the chief executive, the Chairman of the Presidium, was in the background, a mere speck in the distance. One could make out his features only with the help of a strong magnifying glass. The Presidium members in the foreground were of gargantuan proportions in comparison with him.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet was Leonid Brezhnev.

The circumstances surrounding the publication of that picture would seem to add to the sketches of Leonid Brezhnev's political portrait that have recently appeared in some of the Moscow papers.

After the ratification ceremony came to an end, Leonid Brezhnev asked which of the journalists represented *Izvestia*. I replied that I was the head of the *Izvestia* team. The following dialogue then took place between us:

"Are you going to print a picture?" he asked.

"Of course."

"You mustn't. The report must run without a picture."

"But that's impossible!"

"I'm telling you, no picture."

"But why?"

"You don't know, or are you just pretending?"

"Do you mean that picture that appeared with your article?"

"What else? No picture, and that's it."

"I'll have to talk to the editor-in-chief."

"Go ahead."

"What if he decides otherwise?"

"That's up to him. But let him seek advice all the same."

"With you?"

"Why with me? You know who I mean."

In order for this dialogue not to look like an exchange of remarks from the theatre of the absurd, I will need to go back some time from September 25, 1963.

Once *Izvestia* published a page-long article by Brezhnev with his portrait in the middle. Nikita Khrushchev read the issue and, in his usual style, ran the author down for being "immodest". Obviously, Leonid Brezhnev had learned his lesson and made the "sober-minded" decision not to repeat the same mistake.

Let us get back to September 25, 1963. When I arrived at the office from the Kremlin, I immediately told Adzhubei

about my conversation with Brezhnev. We were in a kind of deadlock. We could not print the story without a picture, but nor did we want to "let down" poor Leonid Brezhnev again. Fortunately, in our photographer's film we found a still with Vasili Kuznetsov in the spotlight. And we printed it. So we had our cake and ate it.

This story adds some touches to the mores that reigned in the upper echelon at the time. Without doubt, Brezhnev was motivated by natural fear before the leader. But at the same time this was an instinct of political survival which bore witness to caution rather than cowardice. Without mastering the art of survival, one could not hope for success in the struggle for power, especially supreme power. Brezhnev had that art at his fingertips. It would be a plain injustice to call him mediocre in this respect.

History has shown that leaders who are more skilled in the art of survival and have a greater instinct for self-preservation than their rivals eventually defeat the latter. After Lenin's death, other leaders began to try on his mantle, which fitted Stalin's narrow shoulders worst of all. Stalin was considered to be mediocre but he made the most of the situation. The same happened with Khrushchev. After Stalin died, his entourage began to grab jobs in the Council of Ministers, "throwing in" the Central Committee to the mediocre Khrushchev. What happened next is well known. Brezhnev performed a similar dance.

In a country dominated by personality cult, top leaders were not appointed, let alone elected. The top man would make himself. To use the English turn of phrase, he was a "self-made man". After Stalin died, Georgi Malenkov was elected number one. But he failed to hold out. (In China, Hua Guofeng had the same experience). Brezhnev, on the other hand, stood his ground and stayed at the helm for almost twenty years. And this was not because he was a product, a mediocre product, of consensus.

Brezhnev did not become an unrivalled leader overnight. After Khrushchev was ousted, Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny formed a triumvirate. It was not until some time later that Brezhnev gained domination. In the meantime, Kirilenko was ousted for thinking too much of himself. The shrew Shelest was tamed. And Mazurov was made to retire "for health reasons". No, Brezhnev was not made out of sentimental clay steeped in sweet, tender tears. He was a

ruthless fighter with fists of iron, even if they were gloved in velvet.

One must not confuse a politician's intellectual mediocrity with his ability to become a leader. These are two different things.

A leader's talent depends first and foremost on willpower, single-mindedness, toughness which, at a pinch, grows into cruelty, and freedom from prejudice. Brezhnev possessed more of these qualities and used them to better effect than his rivals, and so he won. For all his feeble intellectual pulse and hedonism which bordered on dissipation, corruption and embezzlement, this much must be made clear.

The paradox—and it is not at all a psychological one—is that mediocrity, not only intellectual mediocrity but also political and executive mediocrity, is by no means an insuperable obstacle to gaining leadership. A more important role seems to be played by “external” factors, such as the time, the system, chance, luck, patience, longevity and, consequently, good health.

In comparing Khrushchev with Brezhnev, the ex-President of the United States, Richard Nixon, focussed on details—the loose-hanging suits of the former and the well-cut ones of the latter. In Nixon's memoirs one can find cliché-ridden descriptions of Brezhnev's French ties and gold cuffs and his penchant for cars and fast driving. In 1973, when Brezhnev was visiting the United States, Nixon presented him with a blue Lincoln Continental on behalf of his administration. At Camp David Brezhnev put him through an unpleasant experience driving the car at breath-taking speed along a winding road. Nixon also wrote of “Brezhnev's masseuse” who reeked of Arpège, Mrs Nixon's favourite French perfume.

Nixon did not put down those details without a special reason; nor was it simply to draw a portrait of Brezhnev. He writes that in the years of Brezhnev's rule, something like “a new class” came into being in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, there is a lot of truth in these words.

In his memoirs Nixon tells the hackneyed joke about Brezhnev's mother visiting his plush dacha. After admiring its beauty and luxury, she asks him: “Leonid, this is all very nice, but what are you going to do if the Communists come back to power?”

The old woman must have felt that perestroika was round the corner.

There were two Brezhnevs—a sentimental one and a ruthless one, an Epicurean and a master of political intrigue, a robust bon vivant and a wreck of a man. Whereas the first pair of extremes are two sides of one coin (one can be quick to shed a tear along with another man's skin), the latter is the work of nature.

It was after Brezhnev's health tottered that he dropped the reins and increasingly delegated authority to a narrow group of his closest aides. He did not become a better man. He became weaker and, in the last years of his life, hopelessly feeble. The nation was ruled by inertia in his name and in his style. Physical stagnation entered into equilibrium with political stagnation. The leader's physical wilting made for even more corruption among his proconsuls.

The last time I watched Brezhnev at close quarters and in "action" was at the Vienna summit in June 1979 when the SALT-2 Treaty was signed. This was an embarrassing and traumatic sight. In effect, Brezhnev could not walk. He was deftly, almost invisibly, carried around—actually carried, not supported—by his strapping guards. When, according to protocol, he was left alone, his infirmity became perfectly obvious.

Understandably enough, Brezhnev's state of health was one of the main topics of the countless newsmen who had arrived in Vienna from all over the world. In effect, it was the main topic at the final news conference at Hofburg. There the American side was represented by Jody Powell, the White House press secretary, and the Soviet side—by Leonid Zamyatin, head of the International Information Department of the CPSU Central Committee, who, as a matter of course, was Brezhnev's spokesman.

Even when he was in a good mood, Zamyatin was not too polite to journalists, whether they be Western or Soviet. This time, waylaid by questions about his chief's state of health, he flew off the handle. Having lost all sense of humour, he made angry retorts, insisting that Brezhnev was as strong as an ox, performing his duties daily and hourly and making truly Herculean efforts in all affairs of the state.

His words convinced nobody. They were left hanging in the air, provoking more and more questions about Brezhnev's health. The last question asked at the news conference dwelt on the same subject.

The atmosphere grew dangerously tense. The Americans

were stepping up the heat. We held our tongues. When the last question was blurted out, I could not control myself any more. Though the questions revolved around Brezhnev himself, they reflected on the country as a whole, and I felt hurt. Addressing the official of the Austrian Foreign Ministry sitting between Powell and Zamyatin, I demanded to ask one more question in order "to restore the upset parity" since most of the previous questions had been asked by our American colleagues. The Austrian diplomat gave his consent. Trying to control my feelings, as if I were about to take the plunge, I said:

"Mr Powell, what is the state of President Carter's political health?"

The audience burst out laughing. The meaning of my question was clear to those present. President Carter's political future looked very dubious. The 1980 elections which gave a landslide victory to Reagan, proved me correct.

Jody Powell was not taken aback:

"Mr Carter's political health is the same as Mr Brezhnev's health."

He said it with a trace of a smile, a meaningful smile.

The news conference was over.

The newsmen jumped from their seats. The Americans patted me on the shoulder, praising me for my ingenious question. But my Soviet colleagues behaved a little strangely (come to think of it, there was nothing strange about it). They pretended not to see me.

Indeed, I had trodden on thin ice. I had violated Zamyatin's instruction not to criticise President Carter at the Vienna talks. And since the talks had proved productive and the SALT-2 Treaty had been signed, my misdemeanour, however good my intentions might have been, became visibly more serious.

After the news conference I went to the Imperial Hotel where most of the Soviet delegation were staying. Once again, I felt some invisible, chilling void around me. The tension subsided only in the evening when the interpreter Sukhodrev came over from the place where Brezhnev and the others were staying and said out loud that Ustinov and Gromyko had "liked" my question.

As if by magic, the situation changed immediately. It was as if there had never been a void. People hurried to shake my

hand and congratulate me. The congratulations grew Homeric in size and content when Zamyatin himself arrived at the hotel and passed on "Brezhnev's personal thanks".

This was how we lived and worked in the years of stagnation.



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Andrei BREZHNEV,
diplomat

When Grandfather Was No Longer

Leonid Brezhnev's Grandson Speaks about Him, about Himself and about Us

When my grandfather, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Leonid Brezhnev, passed away in 1982, I was 21 years old and a fifth-year student at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. Since I had close contact with my grandfather during my childhood and youth, I loved him very much. We grandchildren used to spend our weekends at his dacha, and every summer we would vacation with him in the Crimea. I remember him as a cheerful, responsive and kind person. In his last years, it is true, he looked much worse; he was gravely ill and greatly distressed that his children had got out of hand and were defaming his name. He limited his contacts with the external world and spent most of his time at the dacha, either upstairs, in his study, or in the pavilion, talking lengthily with A. Ryabenko, his chief bodyguard and old army mate—one of the few people whom he had infinite faith in. He was slowly dying, and we felt sorry for him.

When he died, the thought that his death would mark a new

period in my life—possibly a less well-off and less fortunate period—was furthest from my mind. No, my sorrow was too great. Judging by the newspapers, the whole country mourned with us.

Shortly afterwards it became clear that my grandfather's name was associated with a period of stagnation in the country's economic and social life, that in the years of his rule corruption flourished in the country, democracy was curtailed, and many sectors of Soviet industry and agriculture had fallen into decay. The country was in a precrisis state, from which it has still not extricated itself.

I won't say that these reports came as a revelation to me. I had eyes and ears, I had travelled around the country, worked in student building teams and seen a lot. I came to hear various things at school, and then from friends at the institute, including, incidentally, anecdotes widely current at that time, pertaining to my grandfather. So I knew something.

Was Leonid Ilyich himself fully aware of the situation in the country? I don't think he always was. He was surrounded by a superfluous ring of aides and staff and sometimes took obsequiousness at face value. But every person who reported to him was vitally interested in presenting matters as radiantly as possible because he himself was responsible for the situation which has taken shape in that particular field. This is a danger faced by any leader: frank criticism can exist as long as the blame can be shifted onto predecessors. Misinformation begins when the time comes to sum up the first results of one's own activities.

But I did not decide to write this article in order to "spare" Leonid Ilyich or minimise the measure of his personal responsibility. I don't venture to judge whether or not he possessed all the qualities which are indispensable for a leader of state. But I think it's unfair to lay all the blame on one person instead of those who worked next to him and were responsible for specific work sectors. The fact that Leonid Brezhnev has now become the chief subject of caricatures and political posters can be explained: his name has become a symbol of his time, and the settling of accounts with the past is being carried out on a large scale. But when, at the premiere of the film "Assa", rock musicians played and danced on a huge portrait of Brezhnev spread out on the stage, this could evoke in me nothing but a feeling of protest.

But, I repeat, the purpose of this article is not to share my

reminiscences and considerations about my grandfather. Although, of course, I have something to tell. I am concerned about something else.

Why are there some people who cultivate and implant hatred for the children and grandchildren of leaders that have left the historical scene? We are called "petty heirs" and every one of our setbacks is rejoiced at. Rumours are circulated about the vast fortunes we have inherited and the dizzy amusements we indulge in. All of this is splashed over the pages of the press and, even though most of the accusations are never confirmed when checked out, passions grow heated. I know of cases when people had to resign from work, when they were abandoned by their relatives, and acquaintances turned their backs on them. In all such cases the "petty heirs", who suffered because of rumours, were honest, hardworking and highly upright. At any rate they were not responsible for the mistakes of their grandfathers and fathers. If now, reading about the crimes of the 1930s, we remember the words: "The son is not responsible for his father", why do we forget them when it comes to the present?

Maybe I am too categorical in my judgements. But I am speaking about what has been churning within me. I am 27 and my independent life is just beginning, but I already feel that my name is more and more often becoming a stumbling block in very different situations. I want to be like everyone else. I am like everyone else, yet many many people do not wish to see anything in me except my name. I have two children. They, too, are Brezhnevs, so will they also have to experience what I am feeling now? My brother, Leonid, a staff worker at the Institute of Organic Chemistry of the USSR Academy of Sciences, also has two children—will they also have to go through this?

When my name started cropping up in the press, it set me thinking: had I lived properly until then? Perhaps there were grounds for reproaching me? Maybe I was also guilty of something? I can honestly say that I have never tried to profit from the fact that I was a grandson of the General Secretary, nor have I abused this fact. I became a Party member by conviction, and I would like to believe that I have not dishonoured myself as a Communist or a Soviet citizen.

I would like to say something about myself. I was greatly influenced by my mother, Lyudmila Vladimirovna. From my early years I heard her say: "You should be like other

children". Both my brother and I were sent to study at an ordinary, not a specialised Moscow school. Among my friends there were no children of high-ranking Party officials. A very good friend of mine, Andrei, whom I befriended when still at school, now works at the Ministry of Merchant Marine. His father was a driver. My performance at school wasn't bad, but I would not say that teachers made special allowances for me: they didn't spare me bad grades.

In general, a collective is a great thing, however banal this phrase may sound. Rather than go to kindergarten, I was brought up at home, and it was the school collective that made a better human being out of me. I loved school.

We never had servants at home. My mother washed, cooked and did the shopping herself, and saw to it that my brother and I did our homework on time. She didn't allow us to stay a single extra day at home when we were ill. By training, she is a teacher of English, but she had to quit work to manage our household. Materially we were helped by Leonid Ilyich and Viktoria Petrovna Brezhnev; our other grandmother, Antonina Grigoryevna, helped my mother with us children (now she is nursing my children and my brother's). No one ever drove me in a black car either to school or the institute, I went there by bus or on foot—everyone who knew me at school and the institute can confirm this.

When I entered the institute I became commander of a task team, on two occasions I joined a building team in summer, and after the fourth year I went to military camp like all other students. You will agree that there is a world of difference between working in a building team in Kazakhstan, where I went after my first year, and the invented adventures in Monte Carlo ascribed to me.

Incidentally, about my travels abroad. This question has to be clarified as well. In the late 1960s and early 1970s my father, Yuri Leonidovich Brezhnev, worked at the Soviet trade mission in Sweden, and I lived there for four years with my parents, studying at the Soviet school (from the first till the fourth grade). My next trip abroad wasn't until after my third year at the institute, when I worked with an international building team in Bulgaria. After my fourth year, as envisaged by the institute's academic plan, I went to study in Britain, but had to return two months later—Leonid Ilyich had died. I have not had any other trips abroad. Even during recent years,

as a staff member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I have never been on a business trip abroad.

There is one more widespread delusion which I would like to disprove: that Leonid Ilyich was captive to the fancies of his relatives, that he readily fulfilled their requests and whims, and that they "pulled off their tricks" with his help. I must say that my grandfather resented requests being addressed to him through members of his family (Viktoria Petrovna was the only exception), and suggested that everyone approach him officially by coming to the reception desk. Knowing this, we did not burden him with requests. On the whole, I never asked him for anything. Once (I think during the last year of his life) my car was stopped by a traffic cop who asked me to solicit a favour for him so that he could get an apartment. He didn't believe me when I said that my family simply didn't have those sorts of possibilities.

Never did Leonid Brezhnev cover up the sins of his daughter (my aunt), Galina Leonidovna. At an early age she pulled free from his paternal control, never consulted him, and caused him pain. Observing her over many years, I can say that she is an uncontrollable person. There were no laws either for her or her husband, Yuri Churbanov. Churbanov is not very bright and evidently found himself under her influence. He was perfectly well aware that it was thanks to her that he got his general's shoulder straps, universal respect and material abundance (how he acquired it is well known today).

Galina Leonidovna's daughter, Viktoria, my cousin, is a very close friend. While still at school she parted from her mother, rejected her way of life, refused to meet her, and lived with her grandmother, who actually brought her up. Possibly, it is Galina Leonidovna's "fame" that has a considerable part to play in colouring public opinion against our entire family. Regrettably, our leaders' private lives, family troubles and problems remain outside the public's immediate attention, outside glasnost. It is in these conditions that legends—each more absurd than the last—keep springing to life.

Studying at school and at the institute, I often had to answer the other boys' questions: is it true that Leonid Ilyich has a vast collection of paintings? Is it true that he has dozens of foreign-made cars? Is it true that he writes poetry? I believe that in conditions of a democratic state the answers to all these questions should be made available by the mass media. But those who made a sort of God out of my grandfather (for their

own benefit) were not interested in people knowing the truth. As a result, the symptoms of a degenerating disease were taken for signs of senile decay and feeble-mindedness; spinelessness and an instinctive desire to smooth over conflicts—for criminal negligence and an almost deliberate desire to ruin our economy. First and foremost, it was Brezhnev himself who fell victim to the lack of glasnost.

As far as I am concerned, my life is an open book. I'm not about to change my name. I link my destiny to that of our country, I have faith in the wholesome changes being carried out by the Party and the Soviet people today. Inasmuch as I am able, I strive to also take part in bringing about these changes. These are not mere words, but a conviction arrived at through much agonising.

ЛИТЕРАТУРНАЯ ГАЗЕТА

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Fedor BURLATSKY,
D.Sc. (Philosophy)

Brezhnev and the End of the Thaw

Now we particularly need to make a clear and precise assessment of the age of stagnation. We must understand what happened to the country over the almost twenty years that it was ruled by Leonid Brezhnev, to his entourage, and the entire government structure. We must understand that not so as to condemn anything, but so as to evaluate the experience of the past for the sake of a better future.

The very notion of stagnation has to be studied further. There can hardly be any doubts that, while in some spheres, especially the economy, there was indeed a growing trend towards stagnation, in other spheres—politics and morality—there was a visible slide backwards from the ten years of Khrushchev's thaw. The renunciation of reforms, and in many respects a return to the command-and-administrative system of the Stalin years; the freezing of living standards; the stalling of perfectly obvious decisions and instead—worthless political phrase-mongering; corruption and the erosion of government in which ever more social strata were involved; the loss of moral values and the universal degradation of morality—if this is stagnation, then what is crisis? Foreign policy particularly reflected the contradictions of the Brezhnev years

when each step towards detente was accompanied by two steps backwards. Only a few years lay between such contradictory events as the signing of the Helsinki Final Act and the war in Afghanistan.

Out of the many aspects of stagnation I would like to deal with just one: how could it happen that in such a difficult period in our country's history, and world history in general, the weakest of all the leaders in Soviet and perhaps pre-revolutionary times took the helm? I certainly do not want to fall into the temptation of mocking a man who imposed his cult with almost infantile simplicity: four-times Hero of the Soviet Union, Hero of Socialist Labour, Marshal of the Soviet Union, the International Lenin Prize, a bronze bust in his hometown, the Lenin Prize for literature, the Karl Marx Gold Medal—the only thing missing was the rank of generalissimo; he died too soon for that. Mockery is the easiest course and, alas, one of the most persistent Russian traditions. Let us remember the well-known adage: do not speak ill of the dead. With us, it is the other way round—overpowering eulogising of the living and endless defamation of the dead. This appears to be the result of the impossibility of criticising leaders while they are in office.

Of all the leaders in Soviet times Lenin was the only exception. However, Stalin rejected Lenin's legacy in everything he did, while keeping up the hypocritical ritual of worshipping Lenin. As for criticism of Stalin himself, only now is it rising to a serious analysis of the political and ideological regime he imposed.

So it is probably more useful to reflect not so much on Brezhnev as on his regime, Brezhnev's rule, and his style of political leadership which, unfortunately, has not yet died away. We need no less secure protection against this than against Stalinism. No wonder we need a radical reform of the political system, the kind of reform that was charted at the 19th Party Conference.

* * *

Power came to Brezhnev like a gift from the Gods. To turn the office of General Secretary of the Party's Central Committee, a modest job in those years, into that of the country's "boss", Stalin "had" to destroy almost all members

of Lenin's Politbureau (except for himself of course), along with a great many Party activists. After Stalin died, Khrushchev was ranked second, not first, as many believe, because Malenkov was considered number one. Khrushchev had to fight against mighty and influential rivals, such as Molotov, who had been at the helm almost since Lenin's times. This might have been the reason why both the Stalin and the Khrushchev periods, each in its own way, were full of dramatic change, major reforms, anxiety and instability.

Nothing of the kind happened with Brezhnev. He received power as smoothly as if someone had long been trying the Cap of Monomakh (tzar's hat—tr.) on different heads and finally chose Brezhnev's. The hat fitted him so well that he wore it for 18 years without any fears, troubles or conflicts. The people around him yearned for just one thing—that he live forever because they were doing so nicely.

Brezhnev was the antithesis of Khrushchev's daring, flair for risk and even adventure, and his thirst for novelty and change. It might have appeared a mystery why Khrushchev so patronised a man of another cast of mind and temperament, if we did not know Nikita so well. Being authoritarian, Khrushchev was unwilling to share power and influence with other people. So he surrounded himself with men who would nod their agreement with whatever he said and were prepared to act on any instruction he made. He had no need for companions-in-arms, not to mention leaders. He had enough trouble with those sort of people after Stalin died, when Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich tried to drive him away from the political heights or perhaps send him away to rot in the middle of nowhere. Men like Brezhnev, Podgorny, Kirilenko and Shelest were his obedient servants, "underlings" as Khrushchev would call the media people not without a shade of biting humour. True, when things came to a head, those "underlings" changed sides very quickly. There is no such thing as love in politics—only the interests of power.

Some people mistakenly believe that Brezhnev engineered Khrushchev's fall. Many think that Suslov was the mastermind. In actual fact, the conspiracy was led by Shelepin. The group used to meet at some unlikely place, usually a stadium during a soccer match, and there they made their plans.

It remains unclear when Shelepin struck up such a risky alliance with Suslov and Brezhnev. All we know is that he first came to terms with the former, and then with the latter.

Shelepin, however, made a big mistake. He was convinced that Brezhnev was a secondary figure, a temporary ally, and that once he had defeated such a giant as Khrushchev, he would have no trouble in dealing with a man who was only Khrushchev's pale shadow.

The most dramatic problem, which surfaced very quickly, was that Brezhnev proved totally unprepared for the role that had suddenly fallen to him. He became First Secretary of the Party's Central Committee through an involved, intricate and even strange alliance of forces. Everything was mixed up—discontent with Khrushchev's contemptuous attitude towards his colleagues; fears about his unbridled policies and adventurous actions, which had played some role in escalating the Caribbean crisis; illusions about the "personal nature" of the conflict with China; and especially the irritation of the conservative members of the government apparatus at the chronic instability, shake-ups, changes and reforms which were impossible to foresee. A fairly significant role was played by the struggle between leaders of different generations—the 1937 generation, to which Brezhnev, Suslov and Kosygin belonged, and the post-war generation which included Shelepin, Voronov, Polyansky and Andropov. Brezhnev came somewhere in the middle. For this reason, he was initially acceptable to almost everybody. At any rate, he did not evoke any protest. Even his incompetence was a boon as it opened up great possibilities for the apparatus.

In the meantime, a fierce struggle flared up over the paths of national development. One suggested a return to Stalin's methods. Another, put forward by Andropov, outlined an all-embracing programme which drew on the decisions of the anti-Stalinist 20th Congress more consistently than Khrushchev had done. It envisaged: 1) economic reform; 2) a transition to scientific management; 3) the promotion of democracy and self-government; 4) the focussing of Party efforts on political leadership; 5) the termination of the senseless nuclear arms race, and Soviet entry onto the world market in order to gain access to new technology.

Andropov spelled out his programme to Brezhnev and Kosygin in 1965 when they visited Poland together. Some points of the programme found support but on the whole it did not appeal either to Brezhnev or Kosygin, though for different reasons. Kosygin favoured economic reform but insisted that relations with China be restored by way of

offering it concessions and repudiating the extremities of the 20th CPSU Congress.

As for Brezhnev, he took his time, sitting on the fence and watching the correlation of forces within the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee and within the Central Committee as a whole.

Andropov's bold step was probably one of the major reasons for his transfer from the position of Secretary of the Central Committee to that of Chairman of the KGB (the State Security Committee). This was the result of an intricate play of forces. On the one hand, there was Suslov who had felt a long-standing dislike for Andropov as a rival to his job. On the other hand, there was Kosygin who nurtured illusions about an early restoration of allied relations with China and therefore wanted to eliminate a participant in the Sino-Soviet conflict from leadership. There was also Brezhnev who wished to post a loyal man at the head of the KGB and thereby ensure himself against the kind of "joke" that Semichastny had played on Khrushchev. Eventually, Brezhnev showed himself a great master of compromise: he played up to Suslov and Kosygin and at the same time recommended that Andropov be elected an alternate member of the Politbureau and later a full member.

All told, Brezhnev immediately showed his hallmark as a political leader. An extremely cautious man, he never made a single precarious step on his way up. He was what is called a "weather-vane leader". Brezhnev did not accept either of the extremes suggested—either the reform programme in the spirit of the 20th Congress, or neo-Stalinism. By his nature, education and career he was a typical apparatus official on a regional level. He was good at carrying out other people's orders. But he was no leader. So he borrowed quite a lot from Stalin, and something from Khrushchev.

In the early stages of his leadership, Brezhnev would begin his working day in an unusual fashion—devoting at least two hours to telephone conversations with other top-ranking officials and many of the influential secretaries of the Central Committees of the Union republics and regional committees. He would nearly always speak in the same manner—we are thrashing out a problem, so I'd like to consult you and hear your opinion... One can imagine how proud the man at the other end of the line felt at that moment. That was how Brezhnev built up his prestige. He gave the impression of a

composed and tactful leader who would make no decision without consulting his colleagues and securing their full approval.

He was hardly ever the first to take the floor at meetings of the Central Committee's Secretariat or Presidium, but would carefully listen to other speakers. If there was no consensus, he would postpone the matter for further consideration until all those concerned came to an agreement, and return to it later. It was under Brezhnev that the laborious practice of decision-processing was established. It required each document being signed by dozens of officials, which slowed down the decision-making process and ultimately distorted the meaning of the decisions adopted.

Brezhnev acted in a totally different manner when deciding on new appointments. If he was interested in somebody, he would put his signature first and press the matter ahead towards completion. He well understood Stalin's formula: personnel is the decisive factor. By and by, acting quietly and unobtrusively, he succeeded in replacing half of the regional committee secretaries, and many of the ministers and heads of central research establishments. He had the last say when the Lenin and State Prizes were awarded. In general, Brezhnev preferred to deal with distribution and hand-outs rather than production. This was the type of work he knew well and he would take the trouble to phone a person being awarded an order, not to mention the title of Hero of Socialist Labour, to congratulate him and make it clear that he had made the decision himself.

This epitomises Brezhnev's style of leadership. People like him are not competent enough to make sound decisions in the economic, cultural or political fields. But they know very well whom they need to promote or award, and when. Leonid Brezhnev did a good job in appointing others who shared this style to leading jobs in the Party, the economy, and in scientific and cultural establishments. They were "miniature Brezhnevs"—unhurried, dull and unremarkable men, not overconcerned about the matters in hand, but quite good at sharing out the benefits.

People tempered by the 20th Party Congress or simply daring innovators were not shot as they would have been in the 1930s. They were quietly demoted, restricted, put down. Mediocrity reigned everywhere—not that the people were silly or totally incompetent but visibly untalented and devoid of

militancy and principles. Gradually, they filled the jobs in the Party and state apparatus and in the top economic and even scientific and cultural institutions. Mediocrity and decay spread. The country followed its leader.

Brezhnev realised this only too well. His true skill lay in patiently pulling the patchwork quilt of power over himself. He was unrivalled in this respect. And he did it unostentatiously, without any visible pressure. He would even try to cushion the fall of whoever he was going to edge off the chair with a light push. He needed to create vacancies for the Dnepropetrovsk, Moldavian and Kazakhstan teams. He placed loyal allies in all the key jobs knowing that they would not let him down. Podgorny, Voronov, Polyansky and Mikoyan disappeared from the Presidium and later from the Politbureau one by one. Shelest, the leader of the largest Party organisation in the Ukraine, vanished without any noise or announcement. At a Politbureau meeting he had uttered only one phrase on some issue: the Ukrainian Party organisation is not going to support the decision.

* * *

To sum up, Brezhnev came to power without a programme of his own for the country's development. It has happened very seldom in recent political history that a politician has risen to the top without any definite plans. One cannot say, however, to use Mao Zedong's turn of phrase, that he was like a blank sheet of paper on which any hieroglyphs could be written. A man with a deeply conventional and conservative turn of mind, Brezhnev particularly hated any zigzags, sharp turns or major changes. Having denounced Khrushchev for his voluntarism and subjectivism, he proceeded to undo his radical undertakings and restore Stalin's tried and tested methods. The first thing he did was to abolish the economic councils* and the division of Party bodies in industrial and agricultural ones (a kind of pluralism, Khrushchev-style?), which had irked the management so much. Top managers who had been sent to the provinces against their will returned to their jobs in Moscow. In a quiet and unobtrusive fashion, the

* Economic councils were state bodies of territorial management of industry and construction in the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1932 and between 1957 and 1965.

idea of personnel rotation was ditched. As a counterbalance, stability was made the watchword, the dream of any apparatus official. Brezhnev did not revert to Stalin's repressions but dealt with dissent very successfully.

Instead of Khrushchev's eleven-year schooling, intended to provide multiskilled training for students, ten-year schooling was restored. Farmers got back their subsidiary plots. The "maize age" became a thing of the past. Little by little, the emphasis shifted from developing virgin land towards shoring up agriculture in the central regions. Farmers were granted retirement benefits, and minimum wages were fixed for collective farmers. The quotas of obligatory farm supplies were increased.

All these measures in the agricultural sphere had been charted back in the Khrushchev years. The last attempt at reform was made at a plenary meeting in September 1965 when an outline was given of the economic reform suggested by Kosygin.

Brezhnev, however, was sceptical about it. Without going into particulars, he had more faith in the methods that had produced what he considered brilliant results in the years of Stalin's industrialisation. He was also jealous of Kosygin who had all the advantages over him, being a veteran leader whose prestige went back to the period of World War Two.

Jealousy is the bureaucratic synonym for envy. In bureaucratic circles it is charged with special meaning. People standing on the same rung of the administrative ladder keep a close watch on one another, in case a colleague edges ahead before them. They are piqued by any initiative he might take in his job, any article in the press, or any appearance on television or before Party activists or any other audience.

After Kosygin made his report at the plenary meeting in September 1965, Brezhnev was quoted as saying: "What is it he's thought up? Reform, reform... Who needs it anyway, and who is going to undertake it? We need to work better, that's all."

Abominable phrase-mongering became a tradition in the Brezhnev years. It filled as many as nine volumes of "his" writings and speeches. Speeches were made one after another, and some were really good and in the right vein, but they were never fully substantiated. Speech writers put into Brezhnev's mouth the statement that we had already built a developed socialist society. The same was written into the preamble of the USSR Constitution.

Politics ceased to be politics, because politics means businesslike decisions, not long-winded speeches about decisions. It means foodstuffs in the shops instead of declarations about the Food Programme. It means practical headway towards well-being for all instead of promises of Communism around the corner.

It is true that "problem" was a word Brezhnev used very often in his early speeches. He spoke of the problems of the scientific and technological revolution, the problems of labour productivity, the food problem, the housing problem, and other problems. And he called again and again for making resolutions. But for some reason no resolutions were made. And if they were made, they were not carried out. The Institute for Sociological Studies at the USSR Academy of Sciences conducted a survey on how effective the resolutions of the Council of Ministers had been. The findings were shocking: not more than one resolution out of ten was actually implemented.

It is true that Brezhnev was fond of feasting, hunting and fast driving. He introduced the style for rushing at 140 kilometres per hour through the "Communist City". The faster top officials were driven in brand-new ZIL limousines, the more slowly the country edged ahead. There were simply words, words, words. It was the people who had to pay for it. It is enough to recall those "grand" projects to divert the Siberian rivers, or the runaway military expenditure. In the meantime, people's living standards rolled back to one of the last positions among the industrialised countries.

Who was to blame? Brezhnev? That would be the easiest explanation. The people surrounding him, who had a stake in inflating that empty balloon, should be blamed more than he. They knew what they were doing. Yet, the main culprit that should be taken to the court of history is the Brezhnev regime which conserved poverty and corrupted large numbers of people.

Does this mean that the country made no progress and had come to a standstill? Of course, not. The people kept on working away. Industrial output grew, albeit too slowly, and two extremely dangerous trends started emerging. Fuel production was soaring. In fifteen years the country produced as much fuel as in all the previous years. This means that the wealth belonging to future generations was wasted according to the principle: after us the deluge. The other trend was that

the production of consumer goods declined almost steadily in the total volume of output. The nation continued to develop extensively.

Those were twenty years of lost opportunities. The global technological revolution bypassed us. It was not even noticed, despite all the talk of traditional scientific and technological progress. Meanwhile, Japan had become the second industrial nation of the world. South Korea followed in its footsteps. Brazil had become a new centre of industrial power. True, we had attained military parity with the world's largest industrial power. But at what price? At the price of expanding technological gaps in all other economic sectors, the further erosion of agriculture, the failure to establish a modern sphere of services, and the freezing of people's low living standards.

What made things worse was that any attempt to update the existing model of socialism was rejected. On the contrary, more confidence was placed in organisational and bureaucratic decisions. Whenever a problem emerged, the leaders reacted in one and the same way: who was supposed to deal with it? And they proceeded to set up another ministry or some other executive body.

Agriculture and the food problem remained the Achilles' heel of the Soviet economy. But solutions continued to be sought along the same old paths which had proved ineffective in the preceding period. Collective farms were increasingly brought under state control.

The farm-chemicals programme had not produced the expected results. Though in the 1970s the Soviet Union left the United States behind in the production of fertilisers, labour productivity in farming was several times lower. A quarter of the working population in the Soviet Union was unable to feed the country, whereas the American farmers, who made up 3 per cent of the US population, produced enough to export large amounts of food to other countries.

There was only one reason for the economic and technological backwardness—misunderstanding and fear of the structural reform that needed to be implemented by way of placing industry on a cost-and-profit accounting basis, promoting cooperative activities in the service sector, and starting team and family contracts in the countryside. What the regime feared most of all was the promotion of democracy, as this would have led to the limitation of bureaucratic power, Brezhnev's main support.

Any attempts to launch reform and any manifestation of economic independence or independent thought were ruthlessly put down.

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The main lesson of the Brezhnev epoch was the debacle of the command-and-administrative system that had been established under Stalin. Far from ensuring progress, the state increasingly impeded society's economic, cultural and moral development. In one respect Brezhnev and his entourage gained quite useful experience which, unfortunately, lasted almost twenty years. There was no turning back. Even if Brezhnev had decided to bolster his rotting regime by relapsing into Stalinist repressions, he would have failed to make the system any more effective. The technological revolution requires free work, personal initiative and motivation, creativity, constant search and competition. Structural reform and perestroika have proved the only logical alternative to stagnation.

The personification of the illusion of state socialism, Brezhnev led the latter into a blind alley. The only possible, if extremely difficult, solution is to move over to a civic socialist society based on self-governing work collectives and more active individuals—by working for their own benefit, they work for the general good.

Another lesson we have learned is that it is time to put an end once and for all to such procedures whereby the leading jobs in the nation are filled not by way of normal democratic procedures and public activities in the Party or the state, but through machinations behind closed doors, not to mention conspiracies and bloody purges. There is sufficient experience to indicate that in such a situation the more cunning masters of group feuding, intrigue or even plain corruption come to power instead of the more able people, the more convinced Leninists, or the politicians particularly loyal to the people.

The very tradition of political leadership needs reform. The 19th Party Conference has initiated a great reform of our entire political system. This is only the first step, not the last. We need to think hard and do a lot to prevent another Brezhnev, not to mention another Chernenko, from becoming the supreme leader or even a member of the leadership. It is

obvious now that an inept leader is bound to start imposing his cult, wasting the nation's wealth, and breeding corruption.

The rotation of personnel is a major and well-conceived solution. But there must be guarantees to prevent weak, not to mention corrupt, leaders from coming to power for a term of five, let alone ten years. It is necessary to shift the emphasis towards people contending openly for top jobs and, of course, towards genuine elections.

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The art of government is the most complicated of all arts, including military art and the fine arts. Perestroika means that government is passing out of the hands of Brezhnev-style officials to talented, modern leaders capable of effecting dramatic change and looking far into the future not to mention benefitting society and observing elementary rules of morality. In a word, we need masters of government, not apprentices or, even less, lazy consumers of prestige, power and privileges.

A major guarantee against a relapse into Brezhnev's style of leadership is socialist pluralism, which the Party is now promoting. This can be traced back to Lenin's times. At the same time we can go much further. Exaggerated fears about the extremes of glasnost—and these, naturally, accompany a general healthy trend—show anything but concern for socialism. They stem from authoritarian political culture.

Our pluralism is also a guarantee of the rights of the minority. Was Brezhnev out on his own? The absolute majority of executives prayed for him because while he was in office they received everything—titles, laureate awards, academic money, dachas and bribes. He was also backed by social groups who lived quietly and fearlessly off unearned incomes, and continue to do so.

How can the wishes, interests and views of the minority be guaranteed? A minority which seems to be mistaken today might become the chief support of progress tomorrow. The only guarantee is to be granted individual rights—in the Party, in the state and in other institutions of the political system. Everyone must be free to think, speak and write in accordance with his convictions. He must be able to search for the truth and support it once he has found it. There is no other way.

Needless to say, the minority is not always in the right.

Therefore, it must know its place and respect the wishes of the majority. Without this, there can be neither discipline nor order in any organisation or state... This being so, the minority has the right to autonomy only within the generally recognised framework. This autonomy, stipulated in rules, laws and political practices, can become a major achievement of our democracy.

In the scientific and cultural field, the rights of the minority are guaranteed, and this is commonplace, despite the fact that there used to be a lot of bureaucratic violence in these fields too. One may recall how the majority castigated genetics, the theory of relativity and cybernetics, how it lashed out against jazz, not to mention rock music, how it tried to ruin abstract art, and how it rejected sociology and political science. Now it seems to have been recognised that the worst sort of killer is the one who tries to kill thought. On the other hand, there are other spheres, closer to government and politics, in which it might seem difficult to guarantee autonomy for the minority in the face of alternative decisions. Here the law-makers need to work particularly delicately and accurately to determine the measure of combination of the views and interests of the majority and minority, i.e., genuine socialist pluralism.

And the last thing—let us get rid of toadies in politics. All political leaders everywhere are probably fond of flattery. But our leaders in the years of Stalin and Brezhnev craved for flattery of overpowering, cult-like dimensions. Not that they believed in it. They liked to see the flatterer's humiliation and grovelling. Some of our own Fouchés and Talleyrands have passed, like a knife through butter, through all the political regimes and are now fussing around for self-preservation.

Fortunately, people who have a clear-cut programme for national development with the emphasis placed on radical political reform have come to lead the country, and more such leaders are appearing. Hopefully, this indicates the formation of a new school of political leadership and a new democratic culture of the entire nation. This provides a reliable guarantee against a relapse into Stalin's or Brezhnev's traditions.

Brief Biographical Data

ANDROPOV Yuri (1914-1984), member of the CPSU from 1939. From 1940 to 1944 first secretary of the Komsomol in Karelia; in 1953 appointed Soviet Ambassador to Hungary. In 1957 became head of a department at the CPSU Central Committee, and in 1962 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. From 1967 to 1982 chairman of the USSR State Security Committee; in May 1982 elected secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and in November 1982 elected General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Elected alternate member of the Politbureau in 1967; member of the Politbureau from 1973 to 1984.

BREZHNEV Leonid (1906-1982), member of the CPSU from 1931. From 1946 to 1950 first secretary of the Zaporozhye and of the Dnepropetrovsk regional Party committees in the Ukraine, and from 1950 to 1952 first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia. In 1953 appointed deputy head of the Political Department of the Soviet Army and Navy. In 1954-1956 became second, then first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. From 1960 to 1964 chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. In 1952-1953, 1956-1960 and 1963-1964 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, then in 1964-1966 first secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. In 1966 became General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and in 1977 elected chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and chairman of the Defence Council. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee from 1957 (alternate member of the Politbureau in 1952-1953 and in 1956-1957).

CHERNENKO Konstantin (1911-1985), member of the CPSU from 1931. From 1960 to 1965 head of the Secretariat of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. In 1965 became head of a department at the CPSU Central Committee, then in 1976 elected secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. In 1984-1985 General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Member of the Politbureau from 1978 to 1985 (alternate member of the Politbureau from 1977).

KAGANOVICH Lazar (b. 1893), member of the CPSU from 1911. From 1924 secretary of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine, first secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, then chairman of the Commission of Party Control at the Central Committee. From 1936 to 1944 People's Commissar for Communications and leader of a number of industrial ministries. In 1938 appointed deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. From 1953 to 1957 first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the Party's Central Committee in 1930-1957 (alternate member from 1926).

KHRUSHCHEV Nikita (1894-1971), member of the CPSU from 1918. From 1935 first secretary of the Moscow Region and the Moscow City Party Committees, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine. In 1944-1947 chairman of the Council of People's Commissars (Council of Ministers) of the Ukraine. From 1949 secretary of the Central Committee and first secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. In 1953-1964 first secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and simultaneously (from 1958) chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. In 1939-1964 member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee (alternate member from 1938).

KIRILENKO Andrei (b. 1906), member of the CPSU from 1931. From 1947 to 1962 first secretary of the Nikolayev and Dnepropetrovsk Region Party Committees in the Ukraine and of the Sverdlovsk Region Party Committee. In 1962 became first deputy chairman of the Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee for the Russian Federation. In 1966-1982 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; retired in 1982. From 1962

to 1982 member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee (alternate member from 1957).

KOZLOV Frol (1908-1965), member of the CPSU from 1926. In 1953 appointed first secretary of the Leningrad Region Party Committee, then in 1957 became chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation. In 1958 appointed first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. In 1960-1964 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Member of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee in 1957-1964.

KOSYGIN Alexei (1904-1980), member of the CPSU from 1927. In 1939-1940 People's Commissar for the Textile Industry; in 1940-1953, 1953-1956 and 1957-1960 deputy chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars (Council of Ministers), and simultaneously in 1943-1946 chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation. In 1948 Minister of Finance of the USSR, then in 1953-1954 Minister for Consumer Goods. In 1957 first deputy chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee, and in 1959-1960 chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee. In 1960 was appointed first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, then from 1964 to 1980 chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1948-1952 and 1960-1980 (alternate member in 1946-1948, 1952-1953, and 1957-1960).

MALENKOV Georgi (1902-1988), member of the CPSU from 1920. In 1939 became secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and simultaneously deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. From 1953 to 1955 chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1946-1957 (alternate member from 1941).

MAZUROV Kirill (b. 1914), member of the CPSU from 1940. In 1942-1943 representative of the Central Staff of the Partisan Movement in Byelorussia, secretary of the underground Central Committee of the Komsomol of Byelorussia; in 1944 became first secretary of the Komsomol of Byelorussia. In 1948 appointed first secretary of the Minsk City Party Committee, in 1950 first secretary of the Minsk Region Party Committee, in 1953 chairman of the Council of

Ministers of Byelorussia, and in 1956 first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia. In 1965-1978 first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers; retired in 1978. In 1986 became chairman of the All-Union Council of War and Labour Veterans. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1965-1978 (alternate member from 1957).

MIKOYAN Anastas (1895-1978), member of the CPSU from 1915. From 1920 secretary of the Nizhni Novgorod Region Party Committee, secretary of the Southeastern Bureau of the Central Committee, secretary of the North Caucasus Territory Party Committee. From 1925 to 1946 held a number of ministerial jobs, and simultaneously from 1937 deputy chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars. In 1946 appointed deputy chairman and in 1955 first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. From 1964 to 1965 chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1935-1966 (alternate member from 1926).

MOLOTOV (Skryabin) Vyacheslav (1890-1986), member of the CPSU from 1906. From 1920 secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine, secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). In 1930-1941 chairman, and in 1941-1957 first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars (Council of Ministers), and simultaneously in 1939-1949 and 1953-1956 People's Commissar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1926-1957 (alternate member from 1921).

PODGORNY Nikolai (1903-1983), member of the CPSU from 1930. In 1957-1963 first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. In 1963-1965 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. In 1965-1977 chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1960-1977 (alternate member from 1958).

POLYANSKY Dmitri (b. 1917), member of the CPSU from 1939. In 1954-1958 first secretary of the Crimean and Orenburg Region Party Committees and of the Krasnodar

Territory Party Committee; in 1958-1962 chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation; in 1962-1965 deputy chairman and in 1965-1973 first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. In 1973 appointed Minister of Agriculture of the USSR. In 1976-1987 Soviet Ambassador to Japan and Norway; retired in 1987. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1960-1976 (alternate member from 1958).

SHELEPIN Alexander (b. 1918), member of the CPSU from 1940. In 1943-1952 secretary and from 1952 to 1958 first secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee. In 1958-1961 chairman of the USSR State Security Committee. From 1961 to 1967 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. In 1967-1975 chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1964-1975.

SHELEST Pyotr (b. 1908), member of the CPSU from 1928. From 1954 secretary and first secretary of the Kiev City Party Committee and first secretary of the Kiev Region Party Committee; in 1962-1963 secretary and in 1963-1972 first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. In 1972-1973 deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers; retired in 1973. Member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee in 1966-1973.

STALIN (Dzhugashvili) Joseph (1879-1953), member of the CPSU from 1898. In 1917-1922 People's Commissar for Nationalities Affairs, and simultaneously from 1919 People's Commissar for State Control; from 1920 People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. In 1922 became General Secretary of the Party's Central Committee, and simultaneously from 1941 chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars (in 1946-1953 the USSR Council of Ministers). During the Great Patriotic War in 1941-1945 chairman of the State Defence Committee and Commander-in-Chief of the USSR Armed Forces. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1919-1953.

SUSLOV Mikhail (1902-1982), member of the CPSU from 1921. In 1941 was appointed first secretary of the Stavropol Territory Party Committee and in 1944, chairman of the Central Committee's Bureau for Lithuania. From 1947 to

1982 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1952-1953 and in 1955-1982.

USTINOV Dmitri (1908-1984), member of the CPSU from 1927. In 1941-1946 People's Commissar and in 1946-1953 Minister of Munitions; in 1953-1957 Minister of the Defence Industry of the USSR. In 1957-1963 deputy chairman and in 1963-1965 first deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and chairman of the Supreme Economic Council of the USSR. In 1965-1976 secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, then in 1976-1984 Minister of Defence of the USSR. Member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee in 1976-1984 (alternate member from 1965).

VORONOV Gennadi (b. 1910), member of the CPSU from 1931. In 1937 began Party work in Siberia and the Urals. In 1962-1971 chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation, and in 1971-1973 chairman of the USSR Committee of People's Control. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1961-1973.

VOROSHILOV Kliment (1881-1969), member of the CPSU from 1903. One of the organisers and leaders of the Red Army, Marshal of the Soviet Union (from 1935). In 1925 appointed People's Commissar for Army and Naval Affairs and chairman of the USSR Revolutionary Military Council, then in 1934 appointed People's Commissar for Defence of the USSR. In 1940 appointed deputy chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars and in 1946 deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. From 1953 to 1960 chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Member of the Politbureau (Presidium) of the CPSU Central Committee in 1926-1960.

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Серия: «Публицистика перестройки»

на английском языке

Цена 25 к.

Leonid Brezhnev: The Period of Stagnation

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...convincing argumenta- tion?	029 <input type="checkbox"/>	030 <input type="checkbox"/>	031 <input type="checkbox"/>	032 <input type="checkbox"/>
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Leonid **BREZHNEV:**

The Period of Stagnation

NON-ECONOMIC METHODS OF RUNNING THE ECONOMY, UNDEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, A BREACH BETWEEN WORDS AND DEEDS, COMPLACENCY AND DOUBLE STANDARDS BECAME DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF SOVIET SOCIETY BETWEEN THE LATTER HALF OF THE 1960s AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE 1980s. TODAY THEY ARE RIGHTLY LINKED WITH THE NATIONAL LEADER OF THAT PERIOD, LEONID BREZHNEV



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